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AUTHOR Meier, John H.
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ABSTRACT

The current status of and future prospects for the nation's children and their families are discussed in this progress report by the director of the Office of Child Development. Successes of the Head Start program are noted, with particular mention of the parent involvement component. Other early intervention programs are cited, many of which report favorable findings. Investigations of societal and familial factors involved in attitudes toward the family are described, and statistics are given on working mothers, divorce rates, teenage mothers, birth defects, urbanization, family mobility, unemployment and other factors. It is noted that the establishment of experimental Parent Child Development Centers (PCDC's) has demonstrated the value of parental training in the first years of life, when followed by preschool group experiences in which parent and child continue to work closely together. The Houston model PCDC program is described briefly to illustrate how educational-social intervention can improve the functioning of children and their families. Also described are the results of extensive evaluative research indicating significant benefits of PCDC programs to both parents and children. The proposed network of omnibus Neighborhood Family Development Centers is discussed, including cost calculations and bureaucratic obstacles to implementation (Author/BF)

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CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE NATION'S CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

[Address given November 13, 1976, at the 50th Annaul Convention of the National Association for the Education of Young Children held in Anaheim, California]

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by

John H. Meier *

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INTRODUCTORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is always a pleasure to see and meet with my many friends and colleagues who have contributed so much to the growth and development of NAEYC. You have all heard and read about NAEYC's evolution as the nation's largest single non-governmental organization concerned with early childhood education. It is second in magnitude only to the U.S. Office of Child Development's Bureau of Head Start. The heartwarming chronicle of some of the highlights of NAEYC's evolution from a committee of 25 to a vital membership of 28,500 persons is eloquent testimony to its professional value. Professor Emeritus Stolz's cogent and entertaining remarks during the opening evening's reception epitomize the humane qualities of this organization's history and promise. Her renaissance approach to age-old problems in early childhood education is rare and refreshing, inspiring us all to better educate the whole young child in the future. Bruce Gardner's presidency is now history and Bud Spodek's presidency is full of promise. May I take this opportunity to publicly extend my congratulations and best personal and professional wishes to each of these leaders and friends and to each of you as they and you continue to be among the most articulate advocates for children's inalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It seems appropriate that NAEYC's 50th Birthday Anniversary be held in Disneyland, defined as the world's biggest man

*Director of the U.S. Office of Child Development and Chief of the Children's Bureau in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Wash., D.C.

trap built by a mouse, since it does show what can be done for children and the child in each of us. In keeping with this year's convention theme, I have been reflecting on how federal programs have in the past and promise in the future to enrich the lives of young children and their families, increase their liberty to more fully realize their optimum growth and development potential and to enjoy happiness in the pursuit of such a quality of life.

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

I would like to suggest that inasmuch as there is an Older American's Act even moreso should there be a Younger American's Act. Moreover, whereas there will be a spokesperson for the elderly in the White House even moreso should there be a spokesperson for children in the White House. Although the senior citizens could be aptly represented by Ms. Lillian, the junior citizens in this Country cannot rely on Amy, despite her charm and access to power, to adequately represent their cause. And this difference simply underscores the fact that children cannot satisfactorily serve themselves, since they have neither a vote nor a sufficiently persuasive command of the language nor the national resources to guarantee that their needs will be given equitable and appropriate attention. A cabinet level Department for Children and Their Families may ultimately be the best way to get it all together.

Eloquent testimony to this inferior status of children, who many still believe should be seen and not heard, is the fact that less than 7% of the federal budget is spent on children and youth who constitute about 40% of our population and 100% of our future. Children are the most important and delicate natural resources we have...and remember, when today's children become tomorrow's voters and have to decide about our old age provisions, they will

little note nor long remember what is said here but they will remember what we do or fail to do during the next few years in their behalf. Of course, I'm not suggesting that everything we do should be motivated by enlightened and, in this case, farsighted self-interest. I am simply stating that this Nation cannot affort to be myopic any longer about our children and their families made up of us, "we the people," lest we squander our most precious resource and reap another generation of alienated, disgruntled, delinquent and ultimately self-destructive citizens. In my keynote speech to the NAEYC group two years ago, I addressed some of these issues, much as did John Goodlad two nights ago here. We must all work together to put our collective resources, talents, and energies where our rhetoric has been. With some few noteworthy exceptions, the recommendations forthcoming from the past 7 White House Conferences on Children sound like broken records, dispelling the popular and consoling myth that America is a child-centered society. We simply have taken precious little action on the many high-sounding recommendations from such conferences. The Environmental Protection Agency does environmental impact studies and there is now interest in family impact studies — I submit that we need child impact studies to forecast the probable impact of any new legislation on children and their families.

During the National bicentennial year and NAEYC's semi-centennial year, we have all been engaged in reflecting over the past and if the past is indeed prologue the future looks a bit bleak. It reminds me of a bumper sticker I saw here in California several years ago which read, "Jesus is coming and boy is he mad!" However, if we can realize the hopes aroused by the promises of the incoming administration, the future looks much brighter. Let me repeat to you some salient words heard at the Children's Bureau's National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect held in Atlanta last January,

words spoken by one of this country's outstanding champions of children and their families, the then Senator and now Vice-President elect, Walter Mondale:

> "You are a group that has proven its commitment to children and families. In working to prevent child abuse and neglect (or, I would parenthetically insert, working to improve child development and early childhood education) we must not lose sight of the still-extensive agenda that must be addressed if future Americans are to grow up healthy, well-educated, and economically secure. We must not forget that some 10 million children still live in poverty; that a quarter of a million children are born each year with birth defects, many of which could be prevented; and, that nearly two million school-age children are not even enrolled in school, according to the recent study by the Children's Defense Funds.
>
> One rather cynical observer, who studies the seven White House Conferences on Children that have been held in this century, said:
>
> > In the sweep of seven decades, the image conveyed is one of children, smaller than everyone else, lighter in physical weight and political clout, easily picked up and blown wherever the minds of economic, political, and social movements were heading.
>
> The challenge to those of us who are committed to ending child abuse and neglect is to prove that observation wrong, to prove that we are not simply indulging in a social fad, to prove that we indeed share the goal articulated by one participant in a White House Conference on Children--that 'what the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children'."

I would submit that the Office of Child Development should play the lead role in stimulating communities to provide what is best for all of their children and their families. One effective mechanism for OCD's exercising considerable leadership leverage would be a series of grants to states for the support of state offices of child development, contingent upon the submission of a satisfactory state plan for improving the development, coordination, and maintenance of services to needy children and their families.

MY FIRST DAYS (DAZE) AT THE OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

This occasion gives me an opportunity to report to you the progress we have made at the Office of Child Development during my first year as director of this lead agency for children in the Federal government.

One of our staff recently observed that I am the epitome of upward mobility from trout rancher, builder and volunteer fireman in rural Colorado, to parent, to elementary and secondary school teacher, to school psychologist, to cofounder of a residential school for emotionally disturbed boys, to university professor, to cofounder of the New Nursery School in Greeley, to trainer and technical assistant for Head Start, Title I (ESEA), Follow-Through, and PCCs, to child clinical/developmental psychologist, to Director of the John F. Kennedy Child Development Center for children with developmental and learning disabilities to National Director of the Office of Child Development and Chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau. Sometimes, when reviewing this odyssey, I wonder which way is up since I recall the satisfying days as a teacher when observable and immediate results where forthcoming from interacting effectively with a few children or youth.

At my swearing in more than one year ago I quoted a line from Robert Frost's poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," which I fondly remember his reciting to us as students at Dartmouth College. A person pauses on a journey through the enchanting snow-covered woods to admire their beauty and says:

> The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
> But I have promises to keep,
> And miles to go before I sleep,
> And miles to go before I sleep.

Little did I suspect how many thousands of miles and many sleepless nights I was committing myself to as a visitor to and advocate for numerous domestic and foreign programs for children -- blowing in, blowing off, and blowing out -- around the world.

And all of this only to contract more promises and enjoy less sleep--I now feel an even more pervasive and goading restlessness, in light of my increased exposure to all that must be done for our Nation's children and their families.

I have frequently spoken of the child and family advocacy role of OCD and that the "O" in OCD stood for optimum child development for all the Nation's children. Many knowledgeable and seasoned members of the press were sympathetically impressed but traditionally skeptical of my or anyone's ability to make many significant changes in the system. I took the job to learn about the system, hopefully to dispel some of my own cynicism about the bureaucracy, and most importantly to introduce some salutory changes in programs for children and their families, drawing upon my past 15 years of training and experience in child development and early childhood education.

I was attracted to directing the Children's Bureau in light of its illustrious history of child advocacy over the more than sixty years of its existence. Besides, a sort of patriotic fervor beckoned me to serve the Nation during its 200th anniversary; I can't deny some rescue phantasy and cockeyed optimism which motivates many of us behavioral and social scientists to constantly try to change things for the better. I was generally deeply impressed by the many senior senators I paid courtesy calls to, in preparation for their confirmation of me as Chief of the Children's Bureau; these men had given a great deal to our Country and perhaps I too could make some modest contribution.

Of course I'd been forewarned about the red tape involved in getting anything done in the bureaucracy, which was defined as a mammoth mechanism for converting creative energy into solid waste, located on about 16 square miles within the District of Columbia and surrounded by reality. I had decided that the marbel halls of government couldn't be any more isolated from reality them the ivy-covered ivory towers of academia I had been living in during much of my adult life. As the song lyrics go, "Where wise men (people) fear to tread, fools rush in." It has been likened by some newcomers to the bureaucracy as being given a brand new beautiful automobile without a steering wheel, brakes, or accelerator -- and jumping aboard to guide it while it was moving at full (albeit not terribly swift) speed.

I knew I was taking on a major responsibility for directing an Office responsible for orchestrating nearly 500 federal virtuosi, scattered across the country in 10 regional offices as well as within headquarters, all responsible for administering nearly $500 million each year, the bulk of which was directly and favorably affecting the lives of nearly 350,000 impoverished Head Start children and their families and more than 50,000 Head Start staff members.

LOOKING BACK OVER THE FIRST YEAR AT OCD

I have now somehow survived about 450 days in the bureaucratic/political hub of the United States and would like to share briefly with you some of my perspective of the current status of and future prospects for the nation's children and their families.

Shortly after assuming this responsibility, I become privy to the incredibly complex and interwoven interpersonal, inter-office, inter-agency, interstate and international dynamics which interact in many of the policy formulation and decision-making processes. And the key actors are not playing for peanuts, if you'll pardon the pun. They're scheming to protect and build their respective empires -- and the competition for turf is keen and relentless.

Besides the many well-wishers among my colleagues and other friends of children's causes, there were many bearers of bad and ofter ill-founded news. I was warned that Head Start was to be phased out, shifted to the Office of Education, or bloc-granted to the States at any moment -- a perennially recurring wish from several rumor mongers envious of Head Start's many enviable successes.

One of the greatest Head Start successes has been in its parent involvement component. When public schools allow parents to participate in the hiring and firing of principals and teachers, they will have made a giant stride toward more meaningful parent involvement. It is gratifying to note that many public schools are encouraging greater parent participation in their children's schooling -- a favorable change in attitude due in large part, I daresay, to the influence and evaluation studies of Head Start and Follow-Through programs. At least part of the washout effect seems to be due to a sort of regression to the mean performance in many mediocre public school programs.

I'm pleased to announce that before the end of this year OCD will release a monograph, authored by Julie Richmond and Ed Zigler, old friends of young children, recounting many of the other unparalleled successes of Head Start during its First Decade; they include mention of the emergence of a "sleeper

effect" whereby the "washout effect" seems to be attenuated with the passage of more time. Even the New York Times recently ran an article linking impressive reading gains by elementary school children with Head Start and other compensatory early intervention programs the children had previously attended.

This is in addition to much other rich longitudinal data we are now mining to yield lodestones showing the efficacy of early intervention programs. Some of the gems being discovered are like the following:
In Ira Gordon's program 30% of the matched controls were in special education by fifth grade whereas only 1% of the experimentals were referred—a dollar saving which would easily pay for several such programs, not to mention the prevention of human waste and suffering. That is why Glen Nimnicht and I started the New Nursery School in Greeley, Colorado. A disproportionate number of children from Spanish-speaking homes were being placed in special education whereas with the systematic intervention of the New Nursery School experience these previously "Six Hour Retarded Children" were able to be mainstreamed and to cope successfully with the public schools. Of course many critics of the public schools offer persuasive arguments for changing the schools to better accomodate the culturally different child but until that happens, it is important to enable today's children to function successfully in today's society.

Rick Heber's Milawukee Project is now being replicated by Jim Gallagher and is yielding similar results; moreover, the experimental children from the Milawukee Project are continuing to do extraordinarily well in elementary school whereas their controls have continued to decline to borderline and lower levels of mental retardation and special education function. The Brookline Early Education Project is providing extensive data on various degrees of intensity and duration of intervention procedures and promises to be quite instructive regarding optimum matches for individualizing experiences for children in need

of enrichment to compensate for deprived home environments and experiences.

OCD has recently funded a number of the Nation's outstanding child development and early childhood education leaders to collaborate in a major data-gathering effort to cumulate the longitudinal findings of their several studies. Irv Lazar is spear-heading this project, which is coordinated through the Education Commission of the States, and is presently pooling data from the ongoing longitudinal studies of Kuno Beller, Bettye Caldwell, Cynthia and Martin Deutsch, Ira Gordon, Susan Gray, Ronald Lally, Sylvia Levenstein, Frank Palmer, Dave Weikart, Ed Zigler and others. Sounds like a familiar litany, doesn't it? Lazar reports that at this preliminary stage he is most pleased with the favorable data, which by such pooling will allow conclusions to be drawn based upon as many as 3000 experimental subjects in some parameters. It is most gratifying to know that Ed Zigler, the first Director of OCD, is compiling a major book about Head Start, further chronicalling the growth and development of this super societal effort in behalf of impoverished children and their families. Moreover, there is a rich and expanding literature on Head Start and analogous programs spurred on by their presence and achievements. We are now aware of over 600 studies on Head Start alone, many of which report very favorable findings. Abstracts of these studies, including doctoral dissertations, are kept at George Washington University under an OCD contract to maintain an information clearinghouse on child and family development and early childhood education. Educational Testing Service is also warehousing a great deal of data which Virginia Shipman and others are currently analyzing.

The introduction and debugging of the Head Start Performance Standards, a Management Information System, and the Child Development Associate credentialling system all augur well for a reasonably fail-safe, high quality national early childhood education and child and family development

program capable of massive expansion in the event that a national committment and concomitant resources are made available. We are getting our act together and it promises to be dramatic indeed.

I was warned that the Children's Bureau was dead, having been eviscerated, emasculated, and generally incapacited during the past few years. As Mark Twain vigorously observed that stories of his death were exaggerated, likewise for the Children's Bureau—contrary to various rumors, the Children's Bureau is alive and well. Although our efforts regarding child abuse and neglect, foster care, and adoption have been the most visible, there are numerous other exciting endeavors underway. It is conceivable and certainly organizationally and programmatically desirable that several of the Bureau's previous programs, such as the Title IVB Child Welfare authority and the Maternal and Child Health Division, be returned to OCD. For maximum coherence and coordination, several other programs (or at least the parts relevant to children and their families) should be placed in OCD.

In order to complete OCD's internal reorganization, I moved our Day Care Division into the Children's Bureau, where it is receiving a great deal of attention and promises a high yield of policy-relevant information, including useful insights on the controversial stipulations of the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements. Speaking of Day Care, I was warned that even mentioning Day Care would be the Kiss of Death. Last Spring OCD received up to 5000 letters per week which had been written to the President in angry opposition to unfounded rumors that the Feds were proposing to take over the Nation's children, tantamount to the allegations that a previously proposed national day care bill smacked of "sovietization". Since one prime sponsor, Senator Mondale, was receiving up to 7000 vicious letters a day, it was clear that people cared about day care. This prompted me and others to further

investigate the underlying societal and familial factors contributing to a kind of free-floating paranoia and hostility toward anything aimed at the faltering family.

Some Societal and Familial Factors Leading to a Focus on the Family

Our investigation of a variety of sources, including several studies completed or ongoing under OCD auspices, revealed the following representative list of salient factors:

- 33% of mothers with preschool children work outside their home, 50% of mothers of school age children work outside their home at least part time.
- 7.5 million children are in day care, over 90% of which is in unlicensed homes, many of which reportedly are of only custodial quality, at best.
- 40% of marriages end in divorce, 80% of teenage marriages end in divorce within 5 years and many divorced mothers do not remarry.
- In 1960, 5% of births were out of wedlock, in 1976 - 12%; in 1976 - 51% (of 9700) births in Washington, D.C. were to unwed, often teenage mothers.
- 600,000 children each year are born to teens with a significantly increased risk of birth defects.
- For each 1 million teenage pregnancies: 400,000 are aborted, 300,000 are born to unwed mothers; 300,000 of the mothers enter forced and unstable marriages (80% of which dissolve within 5 years).
- In 1910, 40% of the U.S. population lived in an urban setting; in 1976, 75% of population lives in urban home environments many of which are expanding ghettos.

- In 1900, 50% of the Boston households had extended families (i.e. 2 parents, children, and at least one other relative); In 1970 only 4% had extended families.
- Presently, nearly 400,000 children are in foster care and 100,000 are in institutions (50% of whom are mentally retarded—much of which can be prevented).
- The average American family moves 14 times; 20% of the U.S. population moves each year.
- The average child by the age of 16 spends more time watching TV than in school — during age 5 to 15 years, the average child sees 13,000 killings, not to mention other violence on TV, including many "cartoons".
- 1 million youth run away from home each year.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youths 15-24 years of age.
- 5% of our teens have an alcohol drinking problem.
- The number of youth arrested for murder, robbery, rape, and assault has gone up 254% since 1960 (though the absolute number is not huge, yet).
- Unemployment is the prime reason for family deterioration, yet 18% of 2-parent families had non-working fathers and 42% of single parent families with children under 6 had a mother who couldn't get employment.
- When unemployment reached the 20% level in Flint, Michigan, suicide among unemployed auto workers went up 30 times; alcoholism, drug abuse and child abuse soared.
- the variable most frequently related to child abuse is father's unemployment.
- admissions to mental hospitals soar as a direct result of unemployment.

An Ongoing Model of Family-Centered Intervention

The evidence to date indicates that the family is the most effective and economical means for fostering the development of the child. Active

participation of family members is critical to the success of any intervention program. Ideally, intervention begins in preparation for parenthood and in providing an adequate cultural milieu for nourishment of the newborn infant. Large-scale Parent-Child Development Centers (OCD's PCDCs and PCCs) established as national experiments have clearly demonstated the value of parental training in the first years of life followed by preschool group experiences in which parent and child continue to work closely together. Highly significant results have been obtained not only for disadvantaged black families but also for middle-class white families, Spanish-speaking Mexican-Americans, and other ethnic groups. A closer look at one of OCD's research-oriented Parent-Child Development Center (PCDCs) for Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children in Houston illustrates the way in which this type of educational-social intervention improves the functioning of children and their families.

In the Houston model program, social intervention consists of working closely with both the mother and father of very young children. Beginning at the age of 12 months, frequent home visits by a bilingual worker introduce the mother (and hopefully the father, too), to a number of techniques for intellectual stimulation of the child. The mother is coached in her communication with the child in order to promote intellectural and personality growth and development while maintaining strong affectional bonds. Mothers and fathers meet regularly several times a month in the evening to discuss their family problems, to share their ideas and to seek advice. The family is dealth with as a whole and the techniques are carefully adapted to the cultural values and milieu in which the family lives. Consequently, the parents are enthusiastic and most cooperative.

When the child is two years old, mother and child attend a special nursery four mornings a week where parent-child relations continue to be stressed at the same time that the child is introduced to social interactions with other children in a controlled and stimulating but playful environment. Videotape recordings of mother-child interactions are played back for the mother so that she can see where she is facilitating or inhibiting desired behavior in the child. Periodic contacts with the family are maintained after the child is three years old in preparation for entering school. Ideally, the child graduates into a preschool program like Head Start in order to maintain and further develop his growing and developing interests and abilities.

A model program of this type, incorporating the best techniques from earlier experiments, is expensive, particularly when carried out as an experiment with a great deal of research and evaluation accompanying the program. However, the essentials of such a family development program can be achieved without a great financial investment by using volunteers and the heavy involvement of parents.

Nevertheless, one can rightly ask whether or not the benefits from such a program, or reasonably approximate variations on the theme, are worth the costs. The final answers to this important question are not all yet available at this time. However, early returns from extensive evaluative research over the past five years indicate the following few representative findings and trends when the experimental families receiving the program are compared to similar families who do not participate:

1) Parent (primarily mother) benefits:

Changes in parents' child-rearing behaviors, skills values and attitudes vary somewhat among models, but are significant in all three programs. The program effects on participating parents are especially notable because they are congruent with the whole body of research and theory dealing with the relation of parent (primarily mother) characteristics that are causally linked with high early and sustained levels of child development. Statistically significant differences between participating and randomly assigned control mothers provide evidence that participating mothers are:

- More sensitive to children's social, emotional intellectual developmental needs.
- More accepting of their children.
- More affectionate and warmer, using less punishment and more praise.
- More aware of causes of child distress, more skillful in allaying distress and comforting children.
- More aware of the range of individual differences among children, placing less value on stereotypic expectations for children.
- Use more, and more complex, language with child, encouraging child verbalization more.
- Reason more with children placing less emphasis on authority as shaper of desired behaviors, praising child initiatives more and encouraging exploratory behaviors more.
- Feel less restricted and/or intimidated by child-rearing and home-making tasks; find children more interesting and enjoyable.
- Pursue own educational development more.
- Use community agencies more, and more skillfully, to meet family's and children's needs.

2) Child benefits

Both pre-post and experiemental-control group comparisons show the following statistically and (what's more important) really favorable program impact on participating children:

a) Intellectual-Language

- Greater attentiveness, awareness and response to new and discrepant experiences in first year, followed by more exploratory behaviors in second and third years.
- Greater readiness for, and skills in dealing with problem-solving situations.
- Greater vocalization in early months, more and more complex language skills achieved earlier in second and third years.
- Significantly higher general cognitive development as measured by Bayley Scales of Mental Development at about twenty months, and by the Stanford-Binet Test of Intelligence at 36 months. Most importantly, these short term effects are retained or extended at 48 months, while the children in the matched control group gradually fall further behind.

b) Social-emotional Development

- Earlier and stronger attachment to mothers, followed by earlier and stronger explorativeness, greater capacity to relate to strangers in second and third years.
- Interactions first with mother, and later with others are richer in texture, in vocalization, touching, smiling, proximity-seeking to share discoveries; more eye contact and verbalization from distances, etc.
- More and richer play behaviors and fantasy, shared first with mothers and then with other adults.

As the PCDC concept is further refined and programs are running smoothly, impacts on mothers' child rearing concepts and skills emerge earlier and stronger, and developmental differences between experimental and control infants emerge earlier and stronger and promise to endure longer.

Reports on the longitudinal effectiveness of similar programs elsewhere indicate that the children of trained parents or parent surrogates (primarily mothers) have excelled in general development and school achievement, compared to children growing up in comparable homes where the mothers do not receive training. The gains resulting from such intervention programs are largest and most likely to endure when substantial changes occur in the entire environment (or what Urie Bronfenbrenner calls the ecology) of the child as well as in the quality of the mother-child interaction alone. When adequate health care, nutrition, housing, and general support of the family as a child-rearing system are not provided, the gains tend to fade once the intervention program is discontinued.

I am delighted to annouce that the first wave of replication of OCD's PCDC's is progressing smoothly, thanks to the support of the Eli Lilly Endowment and the coordination of Bank Street College. Moreover, several large states and other foundations have expressed sincere interest in participating in subsequent replication waves. Hence, the future augurs well for thos modest exemplary effort, but more is required given the magniture of need. In this regard, I have attempted to distill the highest proof ingredients from a number of OCD and other programs to produce a powerful mixed portion which will be served throughout the country with whatever adaptations may be necessary for local tastes and, perhaps, tolerances.

RECOMMENDATION FOR NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

The following skeletal items outline the salient features of a proposed network of omnibus Neighborhood Family Development Centers (NFDCs) with which all

families might affiliate in a variety of ways for a variety of reasons:

- For fiscal/administrative agents, use existing mechanisms: 1) in State Offices of Child Development or their counterparts, 2) in appropriate agencies located in each of 3,300 counties, and/or 3) in streamlined Community Action Agencies.

  The designation of a lead agency would depend on the organization/reorganization of each given State and/or local bureaucracy (e.g. one NFDC could be located in each county and possible have satellite service stations [SSS] for outreach and serving large geographic or very heavily populated areas).

- Build NFDCs on aforementioned early intervention service, training and research bases plus any new germane findings (e.g. collaboration with the Bureau of Education for Handicapped's First Chance Network has been salutory for both OCD & BEH)

- Build on Head Start network by elaborating upon OCD's Parent Child Centers, Parent-Child Development Centers, Comprehensive Family Resource Projects Home Starts, etc.

  A conference was held in October, 1976 to introduce further coherence among OCD's in-house programs for infants and toddlers before venturing beyond. The White House mini-conferences on infancy last summer [1976] underscored the need for programs for prenatal through 6 year-old children and their families. I suggested that 1977 be declared the Year of the Family.

The Office of Education's Follow-Through Program, the Western half of which I helped launch several years ago in Greeley, Colorado, is a logical vertical upward extension of Head Start to ensure a smoother articulation into elementary school for Head Start graduates, much as OCD's Project Developmental Continuity is doing. The NEDC concept proposes at least to include the horizontal and vertical downward expansion of Head Start.

- Health must be regarded as more than a freedom from disease. Rapid advances in medical technology promise to require less of our physician's time for curing, freeing more of their time for caring and prevention.

  Emphasis on prevention through well-baby (prenatal included) maternal and infant care, adequate nutrition, accident prevention, and elimination of child abuse and neglect. Use pediatric associates and/or other physician extenders for developmental screening to identify children at risk of later delays and go beyond Social Rehabilitation Services current Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) practices which raise many expectations but rarely include the "T" treatment.

  Health maintenance program included — for example, rates for polio and measles shots now falling behind, especially in poverty areas where only 60% of the children are now being immunized and rubella epidemics are now recurring in the U.S. even while we're debating the necessity of swine flu shots.

- Exceptional Children, including gifted and talented, must be identified early and enabled to realize their full potential — "right hemisphere" abilities (non-verbal functions like art, music, and so forth) should receive attention and nurturance, too.

Individualized prescription for handicapping conditions be based on and tracked by each child's own developmental profile - the NFDC monitors each child's progress.

- Family Liaison Person -- These persons work out of the NFDC like a county extension agent only they are trained in family maintenance techniques and have child caregiving competencies (home visitor or lay therapist types); ultimately there should be a Child Development Associate credential for such child caregivers who could work in a variety of settings. There are now 663 credentialled CDAs and we expect 3000 by 1978 for center-based Head Start and day care settings.
- Parenting Skill Development -- OCD's Education for Parenthood program may eventuate in parenting proficiency certification. During the past several years just before coming to OCD I tried a pilot effort of training Department of Agriculture county extension agents in doing developmental screening of children in remote farm and ranch homes in six western states. It's remarkable how much more is known about animal husbandry and even midwifery than about child rearing.
- Family Support -- A recently completed study by the National Academy of Sciences commissioned by OCD recommends a guaranteed minimum income for families (which may include vouchers for child care to give parents the flexibility of choosing among several alternative caregiving options for their children). The NFDC itself would provide and/or coordinate a variety of options ranging from full-year full-day programs to multiple lesser variations on the theme in both center and home settings.

- Resource Access Center — the NFDC serves as a materials and information exchange center as part of a national computerized network. The referral and tracking of children, including those eligible for foster care and adoption would be provided. The NFDC would function as a clearinghouse for a variety of individualized curricula and latest research findings, possible electronically linked to an international secretariat/clearinghouse being established in Paris.
- Community Activity Center — The NFDC is the hub of many related activities:

  Volunteer services — opportunity for Boy/Girl Scouts, 4H, VISTA, etc. to serve and advance family development as well as learning parenting skills (perhaps for merit badges or other appropriate awards).

  After-School day-care and recreational program since aforementioned factors characterizing today's families show a need for day-care for a large age range of children. Moreover, some provision should be made for drop-in emergency health and child-care services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for those unbearably stressful times when children often become the innocent victims.

  The elderly would be encouraged to assist in caregiving and to participate in games, handicrafts and to act as grandparent-surrogates in new extended families, where parenting instruction can be given and received congenially and part of the generation gap may be bridged.

  The neighborhood's youth would be encouraged to give one year of their teens for human services — NFDC Teeny Boppers Brigade.

- Application of government and university findings — NFDCs would serve as living laboratories for studying a variety of approaches to strengthening the family, however it is defined. What are the developmental milestones in becoming and being a parent/grandparent? What are a family's developmental stages, when is it normal, when is it in trouble?

  NFDC would serve as a reality base for generating and updating national policy for children and families (all OCD grants are terminated with policy implication papers [PIPS], which inform next modification of dynamic NFDCs.)

- The NFDC's are a basis for modifying or at least supplementing a child and family's total ecology. I would hope that it would lead to neighborhood planning, indeed city planning, according to Doxiadis's-Ekistics theory i.e. humanizing the environment and making technology more responsive to human needs instead of the other way around.
- The NFDC prototype and other exemplary models would serve as international centers for visiting scholars and dignitaries, as seen in the USSR pavillion of achievement. Besides visiting the Russian showplaces, I recently attended the opening of the Children's Museum built by Eli Lilly Foundation in Indianapolis, which contains not only examples of our children's best art, ballet, puppets, music, etc. but also contains one of OCD's replicated PCDCs — a living museum piece of great contemporary significance, showing some of the best in the state of the art.

NFDC COST CALCULATIONS

OCD now has nearly 12 years of experience in funding and operating Head Start programs located throughout the U.S. and trust territories. A doubling of the Head Start budget, to allow some horizontal but largely vertical downward

extension of many of its existing centers would require an additional $500 million. This increase would enable a variety of programs to be delivered to approximately 1 million impoverished children and their families, about 25% of those now eligible for Head Start participation. Although Head Start has been on a survival, no-growth budget for several years now, it has been refining its delivery system with each passing year and a doubling of its size as a first step during 1977 toward a national network of NFDCs would be a reasonable beginning with minimal waste and maximum impact on the target children and their families.

The full development and operation of a national network of Neighborhood Family Development Centers would be more costly and would have to be budgeted in light of decisions regarding geographic size and location of each catchment area, eligibility for services, sliding fee considerations, and many related management considerations having fiscal implications. The experience of Neighborhood Health Centers, Community Mental Health Centers; County Extensions Offices, etc. is instructive in such budgeting. CCD stands ready, willing and able to begin the necessarily more detailed planning and implementing of the NFDC Network when the required legislation is passed. We continue to argue the cliche that these relative ounces of prevention promise to far outweigh the pounds of later attempted cures, such as prisons, drug-abuse programs, runaway youth programs, and so on, ad nauseum.

REVISED FORWARD PLAN FOR CCD

A Forward Plan should represent the delineation of an agency's best current thinking projected onto a sort of master blueprint for the next five years. CCD's present Forward Plan is severely limited, since it was based on a no-growth, static level of funding with no new initiatives allowed. For the record,

as is often said during various hearings, it is important to note that within OCD we had several good and new projects for which we prepared skeleton plans ready to be fleshed out if Administration policies and committments changed. The preceding NFDC example is a case in point.

Regrettably, the entire Neighborhood Family Development Center notion was rejected at higher levels (OHD) and was purged from OCD's Forward Plan. This OCD Director's dream became a bureaucratic nightmare. In fact, no imaginative nor innovative initiatives were approved for inclusion in OCD's proposed next five years of effort. The strictly status quo mentality characterized by a number of the long range "planners," many of whom represent the penultimate of the Peter Principle, stifled all further brainstorming, since it was clearly an exercise in futility.

What was instituted several years ago as a means of keeping the HEW Secretary informed about major program operations, the Operational Planning System (OPS), had become the tail wagging the dog — the means become an end in itself. Planning became a means of preventing change by a process which deteriorated to a chronic paralysis of analysis.

If some of the planners OCD had to contend with were confronted with a four-legged ape'# ever standing erect, they would have cited all the reasons why it wasn't anatomically feasible and asked all the hard questions about cost/benefits in terms of training, bruises from falling, and back discomfort. They would typically and dogmatically demand hard data on the benefits of walking upright before it had been tried. It has been stated that bureaucrats make inadequate lovers because they always want to do feasibility studies first and by then the mood or opportunity has passed. I prefer the more contemporary definition of planning as an improvisation on a general sense of direction, which

would far more likely enable man to stand, walk, dance, run a mile in less than 4 minutes and use his newly-freed forefeet to make and use tools and technology to further master his environment.

A compromise to establishing one or more pilot Neighborhood Family Development Centers was a proposition for horizontal and downward vertical extension of Head Start to accommodate more of the presently unserved eligible poverty children, birth through school age, since less than 15% are presently in programs. However, this was repeatedly rejected due to fiscal restraints consistent with prevailing Administration policies and committments, which we honored. However, we were also often rebuffed by the same planners because of our weak rationale although there was far more justification for our proposed expansion than there ever was for kindergarten!

Thus, OCD's Forward Thrust emerged from the planning and high level clearance process as a Side Step at best but more like a Backward Lurch, at which time I submitted my resignation for want of anything stimulating to manage except some possibly worthwhile tinkering with existing programs always needing refinement. Nonetheless, I was persuaded to hang on for the full cycle — whatever that is.

I'm in full agreement with and supportive of careful planning for good management and the OPS process is very useful in driving systematically and accountably toward major goals and objectives. The tragedy here is that the unimaginative and repressive use of the planning process resulted in a regressive OCD Forward Plan which in turn dictated OCD's R & D planning and efforts, which becomes concomittantly narrow and sterile. The traditional visionary and advocacy initiatives of the Children's Bureau have been reduced to myopic and tunnel-visioned foster care and adoption services. Admittedly, these

represent important rifle shots when only limited resources are available but they do not address the broad-gauged shot-gun targets requiring more scattered and yet patterned thrusts if the kalidescopic concerns of children and their families are to be included in the Children's Bureau shooting range.

If we are permitted to more fully plan and ultimately implement some of our exciting new ideas, I am sure it will take considerable time and effort. I thought you might be interested in hearing the various steps a new idea must go through and, if you apply these to the Child Development Associate credentialling idea and its implementation, you can more fully appreciate the following ten steps in the

EVOLUTION OF REACTION TO A NEW IDEA

1) Indignant Rejection
2) Reasoned Objection
3) Qualified Opposition
4) Tentative Acceptance
5) Qualified Endorsement
6) Judicious Modification
7) Cautious Adoption
8) Impassioned Espousal
9) Proud Parenthood
10) Dogmatic Propagation

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Many have called for new national policies placing families and children first among our priorities. Few, if any, have expressed this plea as well as my friend Nick Hobbs, who stated the following in an address on mental health, families, and children:

> We need to rekindle the caring spirit in America. To nurture altruistic impulse. To restore civility. To rediscover self in the service of others. To encourage fidelity to family. To honor those who fulfill the difficult role of parent, of father and mother. We need a revived national ethos that cherishes communities, families, and children, out of respect for our heritage and in the service of a noble national tomorrow (Hobbs, May 3, 1976, University of Texas at Austin).

I would humbly submit that getting on with the Neighborhood Family Development Center network is a pragmatic beginning toward brighter prospects for this Nation's children and their families.

MY FUTURE PLANS

To dispell some other rumors running rife during these tumultuous transition days, I'd like to state that for the past 64 years there has been a tradition for the Chief of the Children's Bureau to remain through changes in administration (with one exception). The Office of Child Development, on the other hand was created by executive order and is subject to elimination by one fell swoop of a pen. Children and families are a non-partisan issue requiring poly-partisan and broad-based concern and

support. It is standard protocol for all Presidential appointees, whether appointed for political or professional reasons, to submit their resignation for the incoming administration to accept or not. Now that I have learned the system, survived the traditional culture-shock experienced by non-political appointees entering government for the first time, and have a definite sense of direction not only from within but also from NACCYC members and other child and family advocates. I would be pleased to stay in this two-hatted position or its reorganized counterpart if asked to do so. Regardless of where I am or OCD/CB may be next year at this time, with your good counsel and collaboration and the supportive attitude of the incoming Administration, I daresay that we'll all be able to continue to advance the cause of children and their families in the more promising future. Godspeed to you in your efforts and thank you for coming and staying!

Credits:

Some of the facts and ideas contained in this address were drawn from papers produced by U. Bronfenbrenner, J. Califano, N. Hobbs, W. Holtzman, C. H. Kempe, F. Palmer, J. Richmond, V. Seitz, E. Zigler, Children's Defense Fund, Child Welfare League of America, National Council of Organizations for Children and Youth (now Coalition for Children & Youth), National Academy of Sciences, National Science Foundation, Social Research Group at George Washington University, and various members of OCD staff (who are exceptionally competent and dedicated bureaucrats).